

**REMARKS**

The specification and abstract have been amended to correct informalities. All of the amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure of this application and therefore do not constitute the introduction of any new matter into this case.

Original claims 1-5 have been canceled without prejudice and substituted by new claims 6-9, the only claims under consideration in this application. Claims 6-9 are believed to duly overcome the formal rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 USC 112, first and second paragraphs, and also the rejections of claims 1-5 based on the prior art cited of record by the Examiner.

The Ritchey publication No. US2003/0080531 was utilized as the primary reference, considered individually and in combinations with the Bierherr (German) patent and the Brenner U.S. patent No. 4,252,335. It is noted that the filing date of the Ritchey formal application was September 27, 2002. However, the instant application claims priority based on a corresponding Taiwan application filed on July 15, 2002, which filing date predates the filing date of the Ritchey formal application. Applicant is submitting herewith a certified copy of the priority document for that Taiwan application and a verified translation. In view of these documents, it is respectfully urged that the rejections based on the Ritchey publication should be withdrawn.

It is further noted that the Ritchey application claims domestic priority based on provisional application No. 60/326,173, filed on September 28, 2001. That application was not cited of record by the Examiner in the Office Action. However, a copy of that provisional application is attached hereto for the convenience of the Examiner.

The Ritchey provisional application discloses a device which is intended for connecting articles made of dissimilar materials together, such as metal and carbon fiber parts, which are normally difficult to connect by conventional bonding techniques. The device is in the form of a clamp that may be used for releasably connecting bicycle frame sections formed of dissimilar materials. The clamp includes a pair of corresponding semicircular channel members which surround and engage compression

rings provided at corresponding ends of the connection tube and down tube of a bicycle frame. The ends of the fastening members are secured together by bolts or similar means to releasably clamp the connection and down tubes together, notwithstanding the tubes being made of different materials.

There is no suggestion by the Ritchey provisional application that the connection tube and down tube of a bicycle frame may be releasably secured together according to the structure and manner claimed by the present invention. To assume that one might provide the end of the Ritchey connection tube with at least one longitudinal slot for receiving a corresponding end portion of the down tube and securing the tubes together by quick release which temporarily deforms the at least one longitudinal slot is untenable. This conclusion would necessarily be based on hindsight analysis of the present invention since it teaches against the structural requirements of the Ritchey device that were developed specifically for clamping members of dissimilar materials together. Thus, there would be no motivation for one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the Ritchey device in the manner claimed for the present invention since such modification would effectively be contrary to the intent and purpose of the Ritchey device.

Given the foregoing, It is believed clear that Ritchey fails to suggest and disclose the specific combination of the three quick release connections claimed for the joint tube, seat tube, down tube and sleeve of the present invention, each of which connections utilizes at least one longitudinal slit formed in an end of a first tube for receiving an end portion of a second tube so that the tubes may be releasably secured together by a quick release through temporary deformation of the at least one longitudinal slit. This arrangement provides a simple and highly effective system for quickly assembling and disassembling front and rear frame sections of a bicycle in a manner which is not disclosed by the Ritchey provisional application.

Moreover, incorporating the elements disclosed by the Bierherr publication and Brenner U.S. patent No. 4,252,335 in the manner proposed by the Examiner cannot

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overcome the deficiency inherent in the primary Ritchey disclosure for suggesting or disclosing the invention as presently claimed by Applicant.

The Examiner will note new claims 6 and 7 recite a first preferred embodiment of the present invention, while claims 8 and 9 recite a second preferred embodiment. It is respectfully urged that these claims now precisely recite the invention in a manner which is patentably distinct over the disclosures of the references of record in this application and should therefore be allowed.

If the Examiner should have any questions concerning this matter, the undersigned may be reached at his Alexandria, Virginia office at 703-683-0500.

Respectfully submitted,  
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